

Message Text

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DEPT PASS DEPT OF COMMERCE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTIO, NG

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER CORP COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY

1. AS USG MOVES FROM EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN NIGER TO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SEEKING TO MAKE COUNTRY SELF SUFFICIENT IN FOODS, THERE WILL BE A NEED FOR SUBSTANTIAL FLEET OF VEHICLES AS PART OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN SUPPORT OF THESE PROJECTS. IN CEREALS PRODUCTION PROJECT ALONE WE ESTIMATE EVENTUAL NEED AT APPROXIMATELY 120 VEHICLES.

2. FRANCE HAS DOMINATED CAR MARKET IN NIGER, WITH GERMANY AND UK TRAILING BEHIND. JAPAN HAS COME ALONG STRONG IN LAST TWO YEARS TO BECOME FOURTH EXPORTER TO NIGER. LATEST STATISTICS AVAILABLE FOR CAR EXPORT TO NIGER ARE: 1972, FRANCE 777, UK 141, GERMANY 117 AND JAPAN 109. IN 1973 FRANCE 947, GERMANY 163, UK 132, JAPAN 88. U.S. IS DOWN FOR 4 VEHICLES IN 1972 AND 5 IN 1973 WHICH IS SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS.

3. JAPANESE HAVE DEMONSTRATED THEY CAN PENETRATE VIRTUAL FRENCH MONOPOLY BUT ONLY WITH A) CAR THAT IS RUGGED ENOUGH TO SURVIVE HARSH CLIMATE AND CONDITIONS OF SAHEL; B.) DEALERSHIP; AND C) ADEQUATE MAINTENANCE FACILITIES WHICH ARE VITAL.

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4. AS WE ARE LOATH GIVE POTENTIALLY LARGE PURCHASES OF VEHICLES TO FOREIGN COMPANIES, WE CALLED IN GUY LE BRUN WHO IS DAF DEALER (DUTCH TRUCKS) AND NOMINAL I.H.J.C. REP IN NIAMEY TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF BUYING U.S. VEHICLES FOR OUR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. LE BRUN AGREED THAT ORDER UP TO 120 VEHICLES COULD ASSIST IN GETTING DEALERSHIP FOR U.S. VEHICLES UNDERWAY. HE UNDERTOOK TO CONTACT I.H.C. TO SEE WHAT COULD BE WORKED OUT.

5. WE RECOMMEND DEPT OF COMMERCE ALSO CONTACT I.H.C. AND ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE COMPANY DEALING IN HEAVY DUTY VEHICLES TO DETERMINE THEIR INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING THEMSELVES IN NIGER WITH DEALERSHIP AND MAINTENANCE FACILITIES. PLEASE ADVISE.
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